

Message Text

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GENEVA PASS SHEPARD LOWMAN

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SUBJECT: ESTIMATES OF LAND REFUGEES BY CATEGORY

REF: (A) STATE 144013, (B) BANGKOK 11879, (C) BANGKOK 16502

1. SUMMARY: THE DEPARTMENT, IN PARA 2 OF REF A, ASKED WHETHER APPROXIMATELY 1100 REFUGEES SOILL IN THAILAND WOULD BE MADE ELIGIBLE IF JUNE 9 ENTRY INTO THE U.S. IS ESTABLISHED AS AN ELIGIBILITY-CONFERRING CUT-OFF DATE. OUR ESTIMATE IS THAT 2600 IS A MORE ACCURATE FIGURE. ADDITIONALLY, A NEW READING OF THE NUMBER OF WELL-QUALIFIED CATEGORY III REFUGEES LEADS US TO RECOMMEND THAT THE FIRST 9000 INLAND NUMBERS FOR THE NEW PROGRAM BE RESERVED FOR REFUGEES OF ALL CATEGORIES WHO ARRIVED IN THE THAI CAMPS BY 11 AUGUST 1977. END SUMMARY

2. APPROXIMATELY 2435 LAND REFUGEES APPROVED UNDER IPP-77 SHOULD HAVE ARRIVED IN THE U.S. BY JUNE 9. THE FIGURE OF 1100 CITED IN REF A WOULD APPLY ONLY TO THOSE REFUGEES WHO ARRIVED IN THE THAI CAMPS BY 11 AUGUST 1977, AND
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WHO HAVE BECOME CATEGORY I. WE ESTIMATE THAT AN ADDITIONAL 1500 PEOPLE WHO ENTERED THE CAMPS AFTER 11 AUGUST 1977 WOULD ALSO BE ELIGIBLE UNDER CATEGORY I AND IV EITHER BECAUSE THEIR U.S. ANCHOR ENTERED THE UNITED STATES UNDER PREVIOUS PROGRAMS OR UNDER IPP-77 NO LATER THAN JUNE 9. THE TOTAL OF PRE AND POST-AUGUST 11 ARRIVALS IN THE THAI CAMPS WHO WOULD

BECOME ELIGIBLE WITH A JUNE 9 DATE WOULD THUS BE ABOUT 2600. IN REF C, THE EMBASSY HAS ALREADY PRESENTED ARGUMENTS AGAINST A LATER ARRIVAL DATE IN THE U.S. THAN 11 AUGUST 1977 FOR CONFERRING CATEGORY I ELIGIBILITY.

3. WOULD ALSO NOTE THAT THE DEPARTMENT'S PROPOSED ALLOCATION OF 5000 NUMBERS FOR LAND REFUGEES (REF A, PARA 3) IS NOT SUFFICIENT TO ACCOMMODATE QUALIFIED PRE-AUGUST 11 REFUGEES. THE FIGURE OF 6000 WAS THE PREVIOUS MINIMUM EMBASSY ESTIMATE OF REMAINING, QUALIFIED PRE-AUGUST 11 REFUGEES (REF B). THIS FIGURE HAD ALREADY BEEN PARED FROM 7300. OF THE PROPOSED 5000 LAND NUMBERS, THE DEPARTMENT IS PREPARED TO AUTHORIZE INITIALLY ABOUT 1000 FOR KHMER. THIS ARRANGEMENT LEAVES A SHORTFALL OF ABOUT 1400 NUMBERS FROM THE ORIGINAL MINIMUM EMBASSY ESTIMATE OF 6000 (1000 FEWER TOTAL NUMBERS AND 400 MORE THAN THE ESTIMATED 600 THAT WOULD HAVE FALLEN NATURALLY TO THE KHMER UNDER PREVIOUS PROJECTIONS).

4. AT THE SAME TIME, THE NUMBER OF QUALIFIED PRE-AUGUST 11 CATEGORY III REFUGEES IS APPROXIMATELY 2600 GREATER THAN WE HERETOFORE REALIZED BECAUSE CAREFUL RE-EVALUATION SINCE MARCH OF CATEGORY III CASES BELOW THE CUT LINE HAS RESULTED IN SOME UPGRADING. THESE 2600 PLUS THE 1400 MENTIONED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IN PARAGRAPH 3 TOTALS 4000 POTENTIALLY ELIGIBLE.

5. IN LIGHT OF THE ABOVE, THE EMBASSY STRONGLY RECOMMENDS THAT INS INTERVIEWS PROCEED UNDER THE PRESENT AUGUST 11 CUT-OFF FOR ENTRY INTO THE THAI CAMPS FOR AT LEAST 4000 ADDITIONAL NUMBERS BEYOND THE 5000 INITIAL ALLOCATION BEFORE SHIFTING THE AUGUST 11 CUT-OFF. WE WILL DISCUSS THIS SITUATION MORE FULLY WITH LOWMAN DURING HIS UPCOMING VISIT.

6. THE ONLY ETHNIC GROUP FOR WHICH WE MIGHT WISH TO ADOPT A RELAXATION OF THE CAMP ENTRY CUT-OFF DATE WOULD BE FOR THE KHMER. THERE IS A RELATIVELY SMALL NUMBER OF POST-AUGUST 11 KHMER ARRIVALS. IF THERE IS A HIGH "NO-SHOW" RATE AMONG THE KHMER FOR THE INS INTERVIEWS, RELAXING THE CUT-OFF DATE FOR KHMER ONLY WOULD PERMIT THE SELECTION OF THE MORE HIGHLY QUALIFIED CATEGORY III KHMER WHO MAY HAVE ARRIVED IN THE CAMPS AFTER AUGUST 11. THIS RECOMMENDATION WILL HAVE TO AWAIT DETERMINATION OF THE APPROVAL RATE DURING FORTHCOMING INS INTERVIEWS FOR KHMER.

7. THUS ASSUMING THAT EMBASSY RECOMMENDATIONS ON CATEGORY I ARE ACCEPTED, THE FOLLOWING WOULD BE OUR TENTATIVE PROJECTIONS OF 12,500 LAND NUMBERS. THIS PROJECTIONS DIFFERS IN SEVERAL RESPECTS FROM THAT IN REF A:

A. 5000 NUMBERS TO BE ALLOCATED INITIALLY TO QUALIFIED PRE-AUGUST 11 REFUGEES.

B. 4000 ADDITIONAL NUMBERS TO QUALIFIED PRE-AUGUST 11 REFUGEES.

C. 3500 NUMBERS TO QUALIFIED POST-AUGUST 11 LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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REFUGEES IN ALL CATEGORIES STARTING WITH CATEGORY I.

D. NO NUMBERS RESERVED FOR FUTURE ARRIVALS. GIVEN THE SUBSTANTIAL BACKLOG OF LAND REFUGEES, WE CANNOT JUSTIFY HOLDING BACK SOME OF THE INITIAL 12,500 LAND NUMBERS TO COVER FUTURE ARRIVALS.

8. IN CONCLUSION, WE BELIEVE THAT RETENTION OF THE AUGUST 11 CAMP ENTRY CUT-OFF DATE FOR THE FIRST 9000 LAND REFUGEES UNDER THE NEW PROGRAM IS CENTRAL TO THE PROGRAM'S EQUITY. THAT FIGURE SHOULD BE ADEQUATE TO COVER WELL-QUALIFIED PRE-AUGUST 11 CANDIDATES. THE ABOVE INFORMATION WAS ASSEMBLED UNDER A SHORT DEADLINE, HOWEVER, AND IS SUBJECT TO ADJUSTMENT OVER THE NEXT MONTHS. THE EMBASSY HOPES THE DEPARTMENT CAN AVOID MAKING TOO DEFINITIVE A PROJECTION OF THE PROPOSED ALLOCATION OF THE 12,500 LAND NUMBERS. REFUGEE ESTIMATES - PARTICULARLY FOR THE LARGE LAND REFUGEE CASELOAD - ARE ALWAYS TENTATIVE.

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